

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER
LISTED

MAY 28 2009

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name S-W Supply Company

Other name/site number 037-266

2. Location

Street & number 215 E. Prairie ☐ not for publication

City or town Girard ☐ vicinity

State Kansas Code KS County Crawford Code 037 Zip code 66743

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Patrick Zolner DSHPO

4-10-09

Signature of certifying official/Title
Kansas State Historical Society

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of commenting official /Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- ☐ entered in the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ☐ removed from the National Register
- ☐ other, (explain:)

S-W Supply Company
Name of Property

Crawford County, Kansas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing
3	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
3	total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter Categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: manufacturing facility

DOMESTIC: secondary structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: manufacturing facility

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN
MOVEMENTS: Commercial Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: Concrete

Walls: Wood, Brick, Metal

Roof: Asphalt, Metal

Other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

S-W Supply Company

Name of Property

Crawford County, Kansas

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Industry

Period of Significance

1923-1958

Significant Dates

1923, 1926

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering

Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Kansas State Historical Society

S-W Supply Company
Name of Property

Crawford County, Kansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	5	3	3	7	3	2	0	4	1	5	2	7	2	5
Zone	Easting				Northing										
2															

3															
Zone	Easting				Northing										
4															

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title Christy Davis
Organization Davis Preservation, LLC Date 10/15/2008
Street & number 909 1/2 Kansas Ave, Suite 7 Telephone 785-234-5053
City or town Topeka State Kansas Zip code 66612

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Name Gary and Carol Davenport
Street & number 215 E. Prairie Telephone (620) 362-4384
City or town Girard State Kansas Zip code 66743

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

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S-W Supply Company
Crawford County, Kansas

Narrative Description

Overall

The S-W Supply Company property is located at 215 E. Prairie in Girard, Kansas. It is southeast of Girard's courthouse square, in an area that transitions from commercial to residential. The nominated property includes three different buildings, a two-story main brick building with stepped parapet and monitor roof (1926), a 1 ½ story gabled wood-frame barn building (ca. 1905), and an associated one-story garage building (ca. 1925) with shallow gabled roof. The north elevation of the main brick building fronts Prairie Avenue. Its west elevation fronts the north/south alley that falls between Ozark and Cherokee Avenues. The wood-framed barn is immediately south of the main building, with its west elevation aligned with the alley. The garage sits on the main building's southeast corner, east of the wood-framed barn.

Barn Building (ca. 1905)

The 1 ½ story barn building was built as a carriage house for the Slawson House to its east. When Marion Slawson began manufacturing his stamped-metal products in the early 1920s, he converted the barn to a manufacturing facility. The building served this purpose until Slawson completed his brick building in 1926. After that, the barn was converted into an apartment. Having remained unused for many years, the barn is in poor condition. The interior of the first floor is visible from an opening in the rear of the masonry main building. The second floor is inaccessible because the stairs are decrepit. It is cubed in massing, with a metal gabled roof whose ridge runs north to south. It is clad in board-and-batten. Its main opening is on the west elevation, which abuts the north/south alley.

Main Building (1926)

Exterior

The main building is built of oversized glazed Buffalo brick. It is rectangular in massing, approximately 25' from east to west and 30' from north to south. The north wall is topped by a stepped parapet. The east and west walls are one-story in height, rising to a roofline that meets a centered monitor roof that ventilates the building's abbreviated second floor. The south wall follows the shape of the first floor and the monitor roof. The roof and the walls of the monitor roof are covered with standing seam metal. The square window openings are filled with original steel casement windows. Doors, including a historic wood residential-type garage door on the west elevation, are original.

Window openings on the front (north) elevation delineate each of the building's three bays. The first bay also housed a door opening east of that bay's window. The west elevation has three window openings on each floor – in the brick on the first floor, and in the west wall of the monitor roof. The

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S-W Supply Company
Crawford County, Kansas

north end of the west wall has a painted white sign on it that reads "The S-W Supply Company The 'Perfection Line.'" The south end of the west wall has a pedestrian door opening. The east elevation is like the west elevation, except that it has a large opening between its first and second windows. This opening houses an original wood residential-type garage door, composed of three paneled hinged doors each with four lights. An original one-story shed addition, which appears to date to the building's original construction, projects from the building's southeast corner. This room was constructed as a coal room. The addition has a large opening on its south side, a door opening and window opening on its east side.

Interior

Like the exterior, the interior of the main building has remained unchanged since the building's 1926 construction. The northwest corner of the first floor houses an office. The ceilings and some walls are covered with painted tongue-and-groove wood panels. The north wall of the office, a perimeter wall, was historically covered with plaster. The plaster has mostly failed. A historic pendant-type fixture hangs from the ceiling. A small door on the office's west wall opens to a small toilet. Except for the office space on the north side, the first floor remains undivided. The floors are concrete; the walls are exposed brick; and the ceiling is exposed wood joists. The majority of the floor space is occupied by various metal stamping machines. Belts run from pulleys on these machines to pulleys mounted to the ceiling. Other equipment includes stoves used for enamel processes. The space is lit with natural light from the windows, hanging light bulbs and pendant-type fluorescent fixtures. A two-barrel stove occupies a space in the building's center.

An open wood stair on the north end of the building rises to the second floor. The second floor, which occupies the monitor roof, is one large open space. The floors are wood, the wood ceiling joists are exposed; the east and west walls have exposed studs; and the north and south walls are exposed brick.

Garage Building (ca. 1925)

The garage building is made up of two one-story masses – a rectangular east-west brick mass on the north and a shallow-gabled north-south wood-framed rectangular mass on the south. The wood-framed mass is sheathed in historic composite shingles. It also has exposed rafter tails in the eaves. There is a historic wood garage door on the south elevation.

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S-W Supply Company
Crawford County, Kansas

Statement of Significance

Introduction

The S-W Supply Company is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Industry. The main building was constructed in 1926 to house the company's manufacture of stamped metal markers. Because the building is being nominated under Criterion A, its period of significance stretches to 1958. The original owner and his family operated the company until 1960.

A Brief History of Girard

Girard, Kansas (pop. 2800), the county seat of Crawford County, was sited and named by Dr. Charles Strong, a native of Girard, Pennsylvania. According to local lore, Strong marked as the town site the place where a deer he shot fell. Girard narrowly defeated Crawfordsville in a late 1868 election to become county seat. County-seat designation was critical to growing towns in the nineteenth century when county seats were centers of community life in an agriculture-based society.

By February 1870, the town was bustling with 5 hotels, 4 eating houses, 8 restaurants and saloons, 5 grocery stores, 1 wholesale grocery, 1 clothing store, 5 dry goods, 2 shoemakers, 1 saddleshop, 1 drug store, 1 printing office, 1 watch shop, 2 bakeries, 1 billiard saloon, 1 book store, 7 law and land offices, and 2 lumber offices and yards. In all, there were 72 homes and 140 buildings. Many of the town's 260 residents hailed from Fort Scott. Many others were Civil War veterans who populated the state's southeast region in the late nineteenth century.¹

Girard continued to grow after the Missouri River, Fort Scott, and Gulf Railroad brought passenger service on March 3, 1870. Railroads stimulated unprecedented growth throughout the state. Along with fair weather, they ushered in an unparalleled economic boom. By 1880, Girard boasted a population of 1292.² Brick buildings gradually replaced the temporary wood structures – and in 1886, the last wooden building was moved from the town square. Civic improvements included a waterworks in 1893 and interurban lines to Dunkirk and Arma. The town's population had doubled to 2547 by 1900.³

¹ James Shortridge, *Peopling the Plains: Who Settled Where in Frontier Kansas* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1995).

² US Census, 1880.

³ US Census, 1900.

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S-W Supply Company
Crawford County, Kansas

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Like other communities in southeast Kansas, Girard became an industrial center, spurred by boosters who raised funds to lure investors. In 1884, Girard Foundry opened for business. A zinc smelting plant opened in 1888. More smelters came to town after the Girard Board of Trade raised \$11,000 to lure St. Louis investors. Mining and other industries attracted European immigrants, who were credited for giving the town a "radical" air and the region the nickname "Kansas Balkans."

A progressive community, Girard was at the center of various reform movements. During the 1890s, the *Girard Press* featured a regular front-page column calling for women's suffrage. Industrial Girard was a seedbed for the organized labor movement. While Populist farmers were calling for "free and unlimited coinage of silver," industrial workers called for state ownership of industry in the form of Socialism. Girard became a center of Socialist activity. The Girard Socialists were chartered in 1897, the same year that publisher J. A. Wayland moved his socialist newspaper, *The Appeal to Reason*, to town.

By the late nineteenth century, Girard faced serious competition from the nearby community of Pittsburg, Kansas. Established in 1876 as "New Pittsburg," Pittsburg began as a coal mining camp located on the rail line that linked the industrial towns of Girard and Joplin, Missouri. Soon, industrialists eyed the region's coal for its potential to fuel other industries. By 1883, Pittsburg was home to three zinc smelters and 4000 residents. In 1891, Pittsburg was home to 29 corporations. The town's population continued to grow in the twentieth century, expanding from 10,112 in 1900 to 18,148 in 1930.⁴

Over the years, Girard has successfully fended off calls to move the county seat to Pittsburg (pop. 19,243) by making concessions to their larger neighbor city. Although Girard's population remains steady at 2800, its economy is still tied to industry. Today, Girard is the self-proclaimed "printing capital of the nation," home to five printing firms.⁵

S-W Supply Company

S-W Supply, one of many industries that sprang up in southeast Kansas in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, was the brainchild of Marion George Slawson (1874-1947). Slawson was born on September 10, 1874 to Civil War veteran Charles Slawson and his wife Lydia Slawson, who emigrated to Crawford County from Illinois. M. G. Slawson first left Crawford County to attend business school in Wichita. After completing a law degree at the University of Kansas, Slawson

⁴ US Census, 1900; 1930.

⁵ James Shortridge, *Cities on the Plains: The Evolution of Urban Kansas* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 366.

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S-W Supply Company
Crawford County, Kansas

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joined the law practice of James F. Jacobs in Kansas City, Kansas. After spending just four short months with the firm, however, Slawson's father's declining health forced him to return home to attend to the family farm.⁶ In 1900, the year after Marion's father died, he, his wife Clara Wilson Slawson (1877-1963), and their young son Charles were living in his mother's household.⁷

Marion and Clara turned their attention to their 360-acre Maple Grove stock farm where they farmed and bred Hereford cattle and Poland-China hogs. In 1901, Marion was elected to the Kansas House, where he served two terms. Soon, Marion gained the reputation as "one of the most enterprising young men of Crawford county." Between 1905 and 1910, after his time in the state legislature, Marion moved the family to town where he continued his political and civic pursuits.⁸ He served as president of the Girard School Board and the Girard Chamber of Commerce. He was a member of the Methodist Church, Masonic Lodge and Eastern Star. He was elected to the state school board. Then, he became involved in the Good Roads movement, devoting himself to connecting Girard to larger markets via new highways. According to his obituary, he "had a great influence in getting No. 7 highway [sic] to Fort Scott, straightening and eliminating corners and railroad crossings [and] getting the road to Wichita shortened."⁹

Throughout his diverse career, Slawson collected the skills and connections that would contribute to the success of his next phase in life as a manufacturer. In 1923, Slawson invented a stamped-metal grave marker and founded the S-W Supply Company to manufacture his invention. S-W stood for Slawson-Wilson, his last name and his wife's maiden name. On October 16, 1924, Slawson applied for a patent for his first invention, a stamped metal grave marker. During its first years in business, the fledgling company operated out of the wood-frame barn behind the Slawson home. By 1926, the S-W Company was producing enough grave markers to merit the construction of a new building next to the barn. By 1933, S-W's annual sales reached \$35,000 and employed nine men and two "office girls."

Slawson was not deterred by the Great Depression, filing five additional patents during the 1930s. In addition to his stamped metal grave marker, Slawson invented a plant marker (February 3, 1931), combination grave marker and vase (April 6, 1935), and poultry feeder (September 13, 1938). His experience with the Good Roads movement informed other inventions. In 1931 and

⁶ "Marion G. Slawson," *Twentieth century history and biographical record of Crawford County, Kansas*, (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1905), 578-579.

⁷ U. S. Census, 1900.

⁸ U. S. Census, 1910.

⁹ "Death of M. G. Slawson," *Girard Press*, 28 August 1947.

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S-W Supply Company
Crawford County, Kansas

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1939 (January 31, 1931; October 23, 1939), Slawson filed patents for two lighted railroad crossing warning signs. He also manufactured golf distance markers.¹⁰ In the 1930s, S-W Supply was advertising in *Undertakers Journal* and *American Nurseryman* and was shipping to every U. S. state, Canada, Mexico, Alaska, Hawaii, South Africa, Spain and Guam.¹¹

Marion Slawson devoted himself to manufacturing his inventions until his death in 1947. At that time, his daughter, Juanita Slawson Waller (1907-1995), took over the business. Juanita was born on April 27, 1907. She married Aaron Bret Waller, Jr. on June 15, 1929. In 1930, the couple was living in Kansas City, Missouri, where Juanita was employed as a stenographer and Bret was an adjustor for a tire company.¹²

In 1960, Gary Edward Davenport began working for S-W Supply. He bought the company from the Wallers in 1973 and continues to operate it today to manufacture Slawson's inventions using Slawson's equipment.¹³

Summary

The S-W Supply Company is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Industry. It retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

¹⁰ U. S. Patent Records, U. S. Patent and Trademark Office. Online records at <http://patft.uspto.gov/>.

¹¹ Willis Ernest Lamson, "The Historical Development of Girard, Kansas and Its Community" (MA thesis, Pittsburg State University, June 1933), 66-67.

¹² U. S. Census, 1930; Social Security Death Index.

¹³ Gary Davenport, Personal Interview, 14 July 2008.

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S-W Supply Company
Crawford County, Kansas

Bibliography

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Shortridge, James. *Peopling the Plains: Who Settled Where in Frontier Kansas.* Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1995.

Social Security Death Index.

U. S. Census.

U. S. Patent Records, U. S. Patent and Trademark Office.

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S-W Supply Company
Crawford County, Kansas

Verbal Boundary Description

The S-W Supply Company is located on the West 58' of Lots 1 and 2 of Block 19, Girard Original Town Plat.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property is the legal property on which the buildings sit.

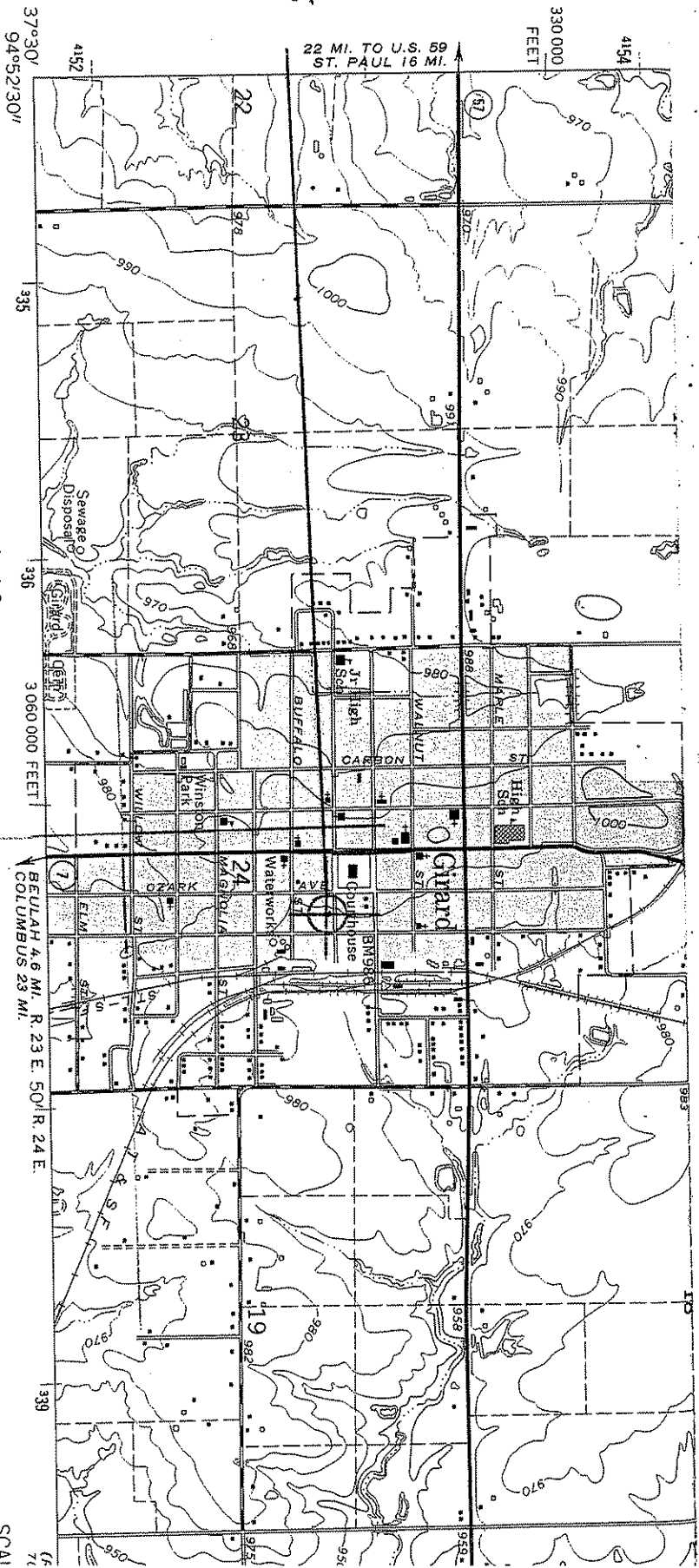
Photo Log

All photographs were taken by Christy Davis on July 14, 2008.

1. Exterior, North (Front) Elevation, Main Building, Looking Southeast.
2. Exterior, North (Front) Elevation, Main Building, Looking Southwest.
3. Exterior, West (Side) Elevation, Main Building, Looking Northeast.
4. Exterior, Sign, West (Side) Elevation, Main Building, Looking Northeast.
5. Exterior, West Elevations of Main Building and Barn, Looking Northeast.
6. Exterior, Close-up of Garage-Type Door on East Elevation.
7. Exterior, East Elevation of Main Building, Looking Southwest.
8. Interior, First Floor, Front Office, Looking West.
9. Interior, First Floor, Front Office, Looking Northwest.
10. Interior, First Floor, Overall Interior View, Looking South.
11. Interior, First Floor, Overall Interior View, Looking Northeast.
12. Interior, First Floor, Overall Interior View, Looking East.
13. Interior, First Floor, Overall Interior View, Looking Southeast.
14. Interior, Second Floor, Overall Interior View, Looking North.

SW Supply Co.
Crawford Co, KS
15 0337380
4152725

(CHEROKEE 1:62500)
7038 N
94°52'30"



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
in cooperation with State of Kansas agencies

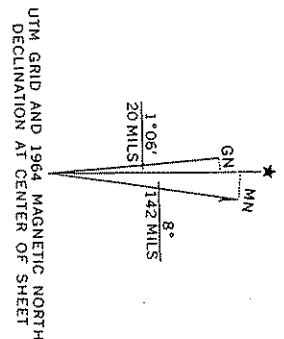
Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1961. Field checked 1964

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Kansas coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 15, shown in blue

Red tint indicates area in which only landmark buildings are shown

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



THIS MAP COMPLETES WITH A
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A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC

